

A TRUE EXTREMISM



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John O'Loughlin

Centretruths Digital Media

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By

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Of Centretruths Digital Media

CDM Prose

This edition of *A True Extremism* first published 2011 and republished with revisions 2022 by Centretruths Digital Media

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ISBN: 978-1-4466-5886-4

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PREFACE

This collection of short prose puts my ideological philosophy through a literary prism, as we explore a variety of interrelated themes from a loosely fictional standpoint. In fact politics, whether associated with a correlative mode of sexuality or not, also figures quite prominently here, though usually in connection with Social Transcendentalism, which is both political and more than political.

Those especially interested in philosophy will find the last three titles in this collection particularly intriguing, since they were conceived in a loosely aphoristic vein, the final one actually being a kind of oblique tribute to Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

John O'Loughlin, London 1984 (Revised 2022)

Free-Electron Sexuality

"I must say, I'm fascinated by this theory of yours, Terry, that homosexuality corresponds to a pseudo-electron equivalence," the professor remarked, turning a pair of seemingly enlightened eyes in my direction. "A kind of higher materialist petty-bourgeois sexuality."

The professor's wife smiled deferentially through prim lips. "And one that apparently compliments the higher spiritual petty-bourgeois sexuality of pornographic indulgence, which corresponds, by contrast, to a free-electron equivalence," she averred, showing herself to be no mean learner either.

I nodded confirmatory encouragement and waited for one or other of them to continue.

"A homosexual materialist and a pornographic spiritualist," the professor mused, smiling to himself. "Why, one might alternatively expect homosexuality to appeal more to LSD trippers and pornography, by contrast, to the practitioners of Transcendental Meditation, seeing as one can distinguish, in each case, between a pseudo-electron and a free-electron indulgence!"

The professor's wife cast me an admiring and vaguely expectant look. "Then one ought to argue that anti-artists who produce a pseudo-electron literature would be partial to homosexuality, while their free-electron counterparts, the pure poets, would prefer pornographic sexuality," she remarked, as though it were an everyday occurrence.

I nodded again, this time, however, in an attempt to express the most unequivocally tacit endorsement of the good lady's argument.

"Well, if that's the case," the professor responded, turning towards his wife, "one ought to equate avant-garde classical music with a homosexual bias, since Terry tells us that such music conforms to a pseudo-electron status, while reserving for modern jazz an equation with a pornographic bias, in view of the fact that it conforms, so we are told, to a free-electron status."

The professor's wife smiled her guarded approval of this suggestion through newly moist lips. "And one might just as well contend that avant-garde painting pertains, in its pseudo-electron status, to the homosexual side of things, in contrast to light art which, through its free-electron integrity, suggests an affinity with pornography."

I nodded my affirmation of this further contention and remarked: "Yes, there is definitely a logical consistency about all this; though one shouldn't forget that in a relatively post-atomic civilization things are also relative within themselves, not just across the board with regards to, say, the distinction between avant-garde classical and modern jazz. These two art forms are also relative – as between a steady rhythmic root and notational pitch expansions in the case of avant-garde classical, and between flexible rhythmic accompaniment and improvisatory pitch expansions in the case of modern jazz. Although we can speak of the one as essentially a pseudo-electron equivalence and the other as a free-electron equivalence, there is a proton side to the first and a pseudo-electron, or neutron, side to the second, in accordance with their respective extreme relativities. And the same of course applies to the distinction between avant-garde painting and light art, art forms which divide into sub-relativities between canvas and abstract painting in the context of, say, abstract expressionism, and between plastic tubing and neon lighting in the context of light art – in other words, between a subordinate materialistic and a dominating spiritualistic ingredient, the ratio of the one to the other varying with the type of art and/or artist in question. Needless to say, each art form, whether painterly or post-painterly, is divisible, within relative civilization, into antithetical atomic biases, so that we can differentiate between pseudo-electron and free-electron painting in regard to abstract expressionism and impressionism (more usually known as post-painterly abstraction), as well as between different types of light art, whilst at the same time acknowledging that, in the relativity of these things, avant-garde painting becomes, as a whole, a pseudo-electron equivalence in relation to light art as a whole, which we can have no hesitation in describing as a free-electron equivalence."

The professor and his wife stared penetratingly into my face, as though at some art object, smiled their gratification for the privilege of receiving such esoteric information, and nodded what appeared to be simultaneous approval of my argument.

However, I could only continue: "Coming back to sex, we will therefore note that both homosexuality and pornography are relative within themselves, the one materially so, with regards to the relationship of two male bodies, and the other spiritually so, with regards, as a rule, to either two photographed participants of different sex and/or to one participant of female sex whose body is either completely or partly on display, with particular reference to her cun ..., I mean, vagina. Such is the way of things in an extreme relative civilization, like America. However, this could not be the way of things in an absolute civilization, the kind of civilization that would stem from Social Transcendentalism, which we should equate with an absolutely free-electron equivalence. Such transcendentalism is a stage beyond petty-bourgeois precedent, a development from the relatively free to the absolutely free. This development will apply right across the board, as much in sex as in politics, religion, art, music, literature, science, or whatever. Obviously there can be no place for pseudo-electron equivalents, and therefore no question of homosexuality being endorsed. Free-electron sex will require that pornography becomes absolute – in other words, not given to petty-bourgeois relativity but elevated above both the simultaneous employment of two or more models in any given photograph and the all-round visual perspective which places undue emphasis on female beauty, even if such beauty is abstract. No, the absolute pornography relevant to proletarian civilization will ensure that only one model is on view in any given photo, and that this model, whether male or female, is displayed in a context which transcends sexist distinctions in a truly spiritualized unisexual absolutism. No doubt, those with a materialist bias in their psyche, men who in a former age would have been if not practising homosexuals then at least wife-violators, would be given, in this ultimate civilization, the opportunity of selecting from the available computerized pornography material which employed male juveniles of lawful age, while those with a spiritual bias in their psyche, men who in a former age would have bought relative pornography and/or encouraged their partners to fellate them, would be given the opportunity of selecting material which employed female juveniles of sufficient maturity in a variety of rump-biased postures. Either way, this mature teenage-orientated pornography would be absolutely post-atomic, significant of an absolutely free-electron status, and therefore bearing little resemblance to the types of pornography germane to petty-bourgeois civilization. It would be on the evolutionary level of social transcendentalism, pure poetry, pure music,

abstract holography, and the wavicle theory of matter. It would, in some sense, have transcended sex."

Both the professor and his wife appeared quite astounded, their lips pursed and their heads gently shaking from side to side. It seemed that this speculative declaration was too far above them to be properly intelligible or sympathetic to their manifestly petty-bourgeois mentalities, which, in any case, could only relate to magazines and the employment, therein, of models who were well beyond their late teens. Probably they would forget all about it in due course!

A Vertical Integrity

Philip Brennan had been standing for over an hour in the company of most of the other guests to a conference of senior Social Transcendentalists, held in the main office of the party's Dublin headquarters, and was beginning to tire a little on his feet, though not without a quiet satisfaction that he had so far avoided the ignominy (as it was fast becoming known to those in the know) of taking a seat in one of the few available upright chairs. Usually that ignominy was reserved for females and youths, who were regarded as less qualified than men to spend long periods of time in a vertical position. Had the Leader not himself declined to sit down in order, no doubt, to set an example to his followers? For, assuredly, most of them were aware, by now, of his views on sitting, which he regarded as a bourgeois habit unworthy of proletarian emulation; though he was hardly a bona fide proletarian himself! However, his views on sitting, as on lying and standing, were representative of Social Transcendentalism, which sought and adhered to the truth about everything, in the interests of evolutionary progress towards a more absolute society.

For sitting was relative, a kind of compromise between lying and standing, in which one part of the body, namely the thighs, was horizontal whilst another part, namely the trunk and head, was vertical, this in turn significant of a compromise between the feminine and the masculine, the mundane and the transcendent. For in case anyone had any doubts on the matter, the horizontal and the feminine were aligned, and sharply contrasted with the vertical and the masculine, which was how they would

always remain.

But not for men, for a society dedicated, more specifically, to revolutionary change in the name of masculine progress! If the ancients, with particular reference to the pagan Greeks and Romans, spent more time lying or, rather, reclining than sitting or standing, that was because they were essentially feminine in character, a people stemming from nature, like animals, who also spend the greater part of their time – indeed almost all of it – in a horizontal position. Not having attained to a dualistic compromise, the ancients were content to spend most of their time, days as well as nights, lolling about in pursuit of carnal indulgence. When not dozing or sleeping, they had been wolfing fruit, swilling wine, and philandering, not to say fornicating. They had even read scrolls and listened to music in a reclining posture, as often as not dozing off in the process. So much for the ancients!

Fortunately, however, man went on to make some progress during the succeeding centuries and, with the rise of bourgeois consciousness, became less a reclining animal than a sitting one – indeed, became properly human.

No longer absolutely feminine, and thus horizontal in his lifestyle, man developed a dualistic compromise between the feminine and the masculine, a compromise reflecting his religious progress towards the transcendent, which necessarily acquired the form of a partly transcendental inclination, as germane to Christianity, that anthropomorphic allegiance between Hell and Heaven, the centrifugal Alpha and the centripetal Omega. So now man, properly so-considered, was in between the horizontal and the vertical as he sat in his chair, one part of him seemingly stemming from the natural and another part of him seemingly aspiring towards the supernatural. Of course, this development had passed through a number of stages, from chairs with slanting backs to chairs the backs of which were almost straight and, in some of the more up-to-date examples, totally so! And, then, the amount of time men had spent in their variously-constituted chairs varied with the individual's social standing and the epoch in question, the European grand bourgeoisie, who were nominally aristocratic, spending much less time seated than their bureaucratic successors of more recent date. However, this wasn't because they spent more time standing, but, as the Leader was only too keen to remind us, because they remained enslaved, in varying degrees, to pagan precedent – the early grand-bourgeoisie most especially so! There were still too many things which

could be better done reclining than sitting, and we need not doubt that the people in question had no qualms about thus doing them. So much for the medievalists!

When we come to the moderns, as the Leader (having briefly drawn our attention to the bourgeoisie ... with their dualistic compromise reflecting a lifestyle more balanced between horizontal and vertical) referred to petty-bourgeois man, we arrive at a procedure the converse of that favoured by the medievalists, with their grand-bourgeois integrity. We note a gradual loosening of the connection between men and chairs. For even though the backs of modern chairs are usually vertical, there is still a concession to the horizontal with the seat, and this concession, though in many instances tempered by diagonally-slanting seats, is precisely what, consciously or unconsciously, petty-bourgeois man happens to be in rebellion against, if only relatively so and, hence, on a rather intermittent basis. His extreme relativity favours the vertical, so he inclines to spend more time standing than sitting, whereas his class predecessor, the bourgeois, spent as much time sitting as both reclining and standing – indeed, probably spent more time sitting, since that would have accorded with a uniquely bourgeois compromise. Of course, one can divide the petty bourgeoisie into early and late stages, thereby inferring two distinct classes, and contend that if the late-stage petty bourgeoisie preferred to spend more time standing than sitting, then their immediate class predecessors, being early-stage petty bourgeois, probably preferred to spend as much time as possible sitting with a straight back in the straightest possible type of chair. Moreover, one could argue that the grand bourgeoisie ...

No, rather than dwell on them, one would do better to bear in mind the Leader's contention that proletarian man, that successor to the moderns, should be prepared, if not to completely avoid sitting during the barbarous phase of his society's evolution, then to completely avoid doing so during the subsequent civilized phase, when all truck with the relative, and hence the horizontal, would be strictly taboo, man having become so masculine by then as to be indisposed to any degree of compromise with the feminine, society having become absolutely post-dualistic and thus exclusively orientated towards the attainment of a supernatural goal. Such was the absolute fate in store for proletarians in the civilized phase of their transcendental society, as championed by Social Transcendentalism in general but by the Leader in particular. In the meantime chairs, although

not strictly taboo, would remain discredited objects, things to which one could succumb in the event of physical tiredness, albeit not without a degree of shame! Gone were the days when chairs could be complacently accepted and utilized on an intermittent basis. The Leader had ensured that much!

Well, Philip was still feeling tired and exposed, in consequence, to the temptation to slump into one of the nearby upright chairs which stood against the wall to his right. These chairs assumed the appearance of ignominious traps at such times, and one of them had already claimed a victim in the form of a young female whose apparent nonchalance suggested the probability that she was less well-informed than most as to the moral nature of her virtually petty-bourgeois behaviour! However, whilst a young female of around twenty would have reasons of her own for sitting down, Philip knew that, if he wanted to remain a candidate for promotion in the Leader's eyes, he would do better to gently shift his weight from one leg to the other, as though marking time.... This, to all appearances, was exactly what one or two other comrades were already doing!

Meanwhile the Leader had taken centre stage, so to speak, in order to address his followers about an innovation which he hoped to introduce into meditation centres in due course. Clearing his throat with guttural relish, he thus proceeded: "As you all know, the practice of meditation has traditionally been carried-on while sitting cross-legged on the floor. Orientals have long maintained this practice and, since the introduction of meditation-centred religion to the West, most petty-bourgeois devotees of transcendentalism have likewise been content to sit on the floor or, alternatively, on a bed or a chair. Now while this mundane habit may be appropriate to Buddhism and other such traditional oriental religions, reflecting the devotee's continuing allegiance to the Ground (no pun intended), that oriental equivalent of the Creator, Social Transcendentalism couldn't possibly endorse it, since we are dealing here not with a continuation of tradition but with a total departure from it, as relevant to an absolutely post-atomic integrity. Therefore we cannot meditate while sitting on the floor, because such a mundane posture would connote with Buddhist relativity, and we are beyond any such dualism. Neither can we meditate while sitting on a chair, which, besides bringing us into contact with the floor, would impose a degree of horizontality upon that part of the

body resting on its seat, just as the legs of those who sit cross-legged on the floor are far from being in a vertical position. No, and neither can we meditate while standing on our feet, since, besides tiring us, such a posture would keep us anchored to the floor and detract, moreover, from our commitment to meditation. So what should we do? I'll tell you what! We must meditate suspended in a vertical position a few feet above the ground, as though levitating, and thus free of mundane allegiance. This is the only acceptable posture for a Social Transcendentalist, and it will reflect an absolutely free-electron status symptomatic of post-atomic civilization. So, clearly, we must design meditation centres in such a way that people can be hoisted free of the floor when they're due to meditate, a procedure requiring the installation of special chest-to-crotch harnesses suspended from some scaffold-like apparatus under the roof of the building which can be raised or lowered by remote control, according to the demands of the occasion. Thus instead of squatting on the floor, like pantheistic primitives, those who practise meditation in our meditation centres will be suspended from aloft in comfortable body harnesses that will enable them both to forget about their body weight and to assume a more transcendent posture – one relevant to the exclusive verticality of a proletarian civilization, beyond all dualistic compromises."

Ah, how the phrase 'to forget about their body weight' appealed to Philip Brennan at that moment, now that he had been standing on his feet for over an hour-and-a-half! He was certainly unable to forget about his own, or to completely detach his mind from the tempting proximity of those few straight-backed chairs to his right, which made him slightly envious of the seated young woman whose morals appeared to be less rigorously applied than his own. If only such harnesses as the Leader had spoken of were to be found in his office! But, of course, meditation and ideological meetings were two entirely different things. Perhaps, however, a day would eventually dawn when some scaffold-like apparatus would be installed even for the latter, indeed for any meetings between people, so that instead of standing on tired feet or succumbing to a chair – that bourgeois anachronism – one would automatically step into a body harness and be hoisted aloft, to conduct one's tête-à-tête, or whatever, in a comfortably vertical position, a truly-civilized posture. Well, there was at any rate a degree of comfort in the thought, and Philip Brennan needed all the comfort he could get, now that the meeting was over and the Leader had left the office, presumably to slump into a chair himself. It was at least a

relief for Philip Brennan to know that he was not the only one in need of a seat at this moment!

Creative Extremes

James had loved her passionately as a youth, when they had worked in the same office for a time, but only from a distance, because her love had been bestowed on someone else, a fellow-worker who was either quicker off the romantic mark or just less inhibited than himself. He suffered his unrequited love for her throughout the years following her departure from the firm, and when he also departed to become an apprentice author, his life had grown accustomed to solitary nights and friendless days. Being alone in his lodgings was no great burden on him. On the contrary, it was a logical step from his previous loneliness.

And so he wrote for years, throughout the greater part of each weekday, until the number of typescripts – writing first, typing later – piled-up in his room, and his notebooks, in which the works were drafted, grew to fill a large drawer. He considered himself, above all else, a philosopher, a seeker after the Truth, a pioneer of new insights into life and the world. He was too serious-minded to be content with fiction, his solitude and unrequited love not having conditioned him to become an artist in the usual objective sense. He was resigned to philosophy, even when he realized it was the most intellectually-demanding mode of writing and the least commercially viable. Better to be a philosopher, he thought, than to have remained a clerk. Besides, I am no ordinary philosopher. More a revolutionary pseudo-philosopher than a traditional type.... Not that he discovered this fact all at once, but only when the time was ripe. A pseudo-philosopher was somehow superior to a genuine, or academic, philosopher, more a man of essence than of appearance, a metaphysician as opposed to a physicist, an original writer rather than 'a chair'. In similar vein, a pseudo-state was somehow superior to a genuine state, a matter of the people rather than either the land or country considered from a nationalist point of view.

Pseudo-democracy could likewise be considered superior to genuine democracy, giving maximum representation to the electorate – a qualitative absolutism.

Yes, James Riley realized all this and so much else as, year after year, he scribbled the time away in his single room and noted the progress of his work from a bourgeois relative stage to an early petty-bourgeois relatively absolute stage, and even, in due course, to a late petty-bourgeois absolute stage of creative and ideological integrity. If he had begun as a philosopher or, more correctly, as a philosophical novelist and essayist, he had progressed quite some way beyond that point by the time he came to evaluate the ideologically creative status of his various stages of philosophical endeavour. Why, he had recently abandoned even the pseudo-philosophical in his evolution towards a quasi-poetic integrity, a lower phase of his late-stage petty-bourgeois writings, relevant to a new ideology in the form of Social Transcendentalism, which pertained to the future development of a proletarian civilization. Gone were the days when he could take academic philosophy seriously! All that empirically-based appearance-mongering was not for him. Even the pseudo-philosophical endeavour was now effectively a thing of his past, a passing phase in his evolution to higher things. It always amazed him when he looked back over his early work and noted the intellectual distance between that and his latest work. Was it possible that the same person had written both?

Ah, but even if such a question had to be answered affirmatively, there could be no denying that the persona relevant to each stage of his creative evolution had continuously changed for the better, for more radically extreme positions. The persona was not him, no! But it had developed at his expense and to a degree he scarcely imagined possible. Certainly there were times when he wanted to disown it, to turn away from and abandon it, like an alienated husband about to divorce a petulant wife. Was he not, after all, a petty bourgeois, for whom the comforts of the home were more important than the struggles of the street? He could not deny *that* fact, even though he was less than confident he could escape from his persona and return to a more relative style and content. He found it hard to believe that, with the inevitable termination of his quasi-poetic writings in due course, he could return to being a philosophical novelist and literary philosopher. Had he not said everything there was to be said within that context? Besides, wasn't being a philosophical novelist a waste of time these days, an anachronistic grand-bourgeois approach to the novel in an age of petty-bourgeois poetics?

No, philosophical novels weren't for him, not now! His revolutionary

urban conditioning would never allow him to return to *that* level again. Even the poetic novel was beneath him, an early-stage petty-bourgeois art form more suited to the first-half of the twentieth century than to its second. Besides, he had never really been a poetic artist but a philosopher and philosophical artist turned pseudo-philosopher and, more recently, quasi-poet, the latter still being a type of philosophical writer, a continuation of his collectivizing tendencies from essayettes at the beginning to a novelette or, rather, medium prose at the end, as a sort of climax. Whereas the artist made progress, over the generations, by evolving from the novel to the poetic novelette and even, in a late petty-bourgeois age, to the poetic short-story, the philosopher made progress by evolving from essays and dialogues to philosophical short prose and the philosophical novelette, attained to a petty-bourgeois status with the abandonment of the older genres for the newer ones, used either collectively or separately. Thus arose the extraordinary paradox that whilst a philosophical novel was a grand-bourgeois approach to literature, an approach more appropriate to a late grand-bourgeois age like the mid-seventeenth century, a philosophical novelette was a petty-bourgeois approach to philosophy, one more relevant to a late petty-bourgeois age like the second-half of the twentieth century. So the contemporary philosopher, or pseudo-philosopher, was effectively a 'novelettist', just as the contemporary artist, or pseudo-artist, was a short-story writer, both of them co-existent with the modern poet, a largely metaphysical and/or experimental creator, the most representative of the age.

But James Riley – our mysterious subject of intellectual inquiry – didn't exactly fit into any of these late-stage petty-bourgeois patterns; he was neither a contemporary philosopher, artist, nor poet, but a Western outsider, an Irishman of predominantly Catholic descent writing on behalf of a future civilization in terms which set him radically apart from all those who fitted into ...